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Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1855 Apr. 10

John W. H. Baker

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Mokelumne Hill, April 10th, 1855

My Dear Wife

Your letter bearing date March 1st was recieved a few days since in which you announce the reception of my letter informing you of my intention relative to the time at which I would most likely start for home. I was happy to think you were all pleased with the anticipation of the time at which I should come. But I shall be much happier to meet you all in good health knowing that I have arrived safely at my old home, among my own family and my own friends once more. I now intend starting on the 1st of May from San Francisco, and that being the case your next letter after this will be likely to prove a walking, talking one.

I sold out my interest in the Store one week ago and dissolved the copartnership. I am now doing nothing but loafing about making endeavors to collect some of my debts. I make very slow progress as yet, but hope to do better this and the next week. If I can realize some \$300 or \$400 from the debts due I would feel pretty well satisfied. As to a close collection of debts, it would be impossible to make such during the next six months. We are having a little rain today but the time has past to expect that we will have sufficient water to effect much of a benefit to mining interests.

I have succeeded better in my arrangment of matters with Dr. H. than I had expected for I had anticipated some difficulty with him in the purchase but I had none at all, and thus far we have passed along very cleverly together. But had he been associated with any other person in the world I think he would not have had all the indulgence which I have given him. I always reconciled myself, whenever I felt aggrieved, with the thought that a quarrel with him would do neither myself or him any good but possibly much harm. therefore I would bear many things which I considered wrong for the sake of peace and quiet.

We have thus far had no difficulty and I now hope to be spared from such forever.

Your letter of March 20th will be due this week and will be the last letter I shall be likely to receive from you before my arrival. I hope to hear by that of your continued good health.

I cannot refrain from thinking of the exclamations of the children which you write me they made upon the reading of my letter announcing the time when I expected to return. Fred saying, "That's good! That's good!" and Laura Maria, "That is nice! that's nice!" I can but wonder what they will say when they see me. I hardly think they would recognize me were I to pass the house when they were not expecting me and I am not certain that you would yourself, unless you should have a fair view of me.

I now anticipate some seasickness, and if it should be as severe as it was when I came out to this country it would change me into nearly the lean and lank appearance I had when I left Meriden. But I hope and pray that I may be preserved from that severely sick time which I endured in my outward voyage. I now expect quite a number of my acquaintances will leave San Francisco at the same time that I do, so I shall be likely to have company through to N. Y. that I am well acquainted with here. I wrote you some time since that John Storrs talked some of returning at the time ~~at~~ I do, but it is very doubtful, and I am not thinking he will not. So far as company of old friends and acquaintances are concerned on such a journey with me I would like one or two but more than that number I would not care to have, for "too much of a good thing is worse than none" and too many friends will in many cases impoverish a man.

I received by the last mail a letter from Mr. B. Wingate in which he expresses much satisfaction at the prospect of my return to Meriden, although he seemed surprised to hear of it--- I shall most likely add a few lines to-morrow to this letter, but as it is getting somewhat late in the evening I will now bid you good night and betake myself to my bed and listening to the pattering of the rain upon the roof of the

Letter 51

-3-

house endeavor to refresh myself with a good night's sleep.

Apr. 11th We have had a very rainy night and taking that with a cloudy sky I was so deceived by appearances that I remained in bed untill half past eight when I was aroused by Holbrook knocking for admittance-- When I looked out I was surprised to see that we were having a snow storm, and upon the hills I should judge there was near an inch of snow--that is something quite new. The weather for a week or more previous had been exceedingly warm--

It is now 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock and I can see no snow although the air is somewhat chilly--We have had but 3 or 4 nights during the season in which water would be frozen and now to have a snow storm on the 11th of April is quite a novelty--

I perceive by the States Papers brought by the Nicaragua Steamer and received here today that the Steamers are to run in opposition after the 20th of this month. that being the case I hope to reap the benefit of such a reduction. I think that the prices will rule quite reasonable on the 1st of May---I learn by the Boston papers that politics were in a commotion, that the whole State were raised to a high pitch of excitement upon Political matters, that an Anti-Pierce convention had been held at Concord and the general belief was that the N. H. Democracy would be overthrown and demolished. That the old Democracy have fallen through I shall be rejoiced to hear. Americanism I suppose is a strong force to overcome in the Granite State.

I shall probably be with you in two or three weeks after the reception of this my last California letter to and for which time May the Lord spare us all--

Mrs. Julia Ann Baker
Meriden, N. H.

From your affectionate Husband
John W. H. Baker